

pushing a rock up a hill. And I'll help you if I can. This is a big deal for America.

We're still not near safe enough as a country. I'm glad the crime rate has gone down for 8 years. It's a gift you can give the children of your members and the communities in which you live.

And finally, let me say, I hope you will continue on some of the things we disagreed with over the years. We've got to figure out how to put a human face on the global economy. We are becoming more interdependent. We are becoming more and more interdependent. There is going to be more trade whether we like it or not, a trillion dollars a day in pure—just money transactions across national lines.

We have got to figure out how to be on the side of making sure that the little folks in every country in the world are not trampled on by the increasing power of financial transactions and international economic transactions. Instead, we have to prove that we can lift up the fortunes of all people. We have to have good labor rights. We have to have good environmental standards. We have to have fair and open financial rules, so that people don't get ripped off. We've got to do this together, and you've got to be part of the debate. Whenever you're part of the debate, America wins, and Americans win.

And I'll tell you, I've had a great time. I said yesterday in my church, they may find somebody who can do this job better than me; they will never find anybody that had any more fun doing it than I had. I have had a great time. But America is always about tomorrow. And I will end where I began.

This building should be a metaphor for the future of the AFL and the future of America. You built a new building with new technology for new times on old foundations. You stayed with what was best about the past and embraced what was necessary and attractive about the future.

So whenever you come in the front door of this building, think about that as a roadmap for your future. And remember what Susan said about a union being like a family and a workplace being like a family and a nation being like a family. And remember that great line from George Meany's speech—we should never forget our obliga-

tion to do unto others as we would like to be treated ourselves. We should never forget that politics, work, and life are all team sports. It's been an honor to be on your team.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the lobby. In his remarks, he referred to International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers member Susan Hagan, who introduced the President; Ms. Hagan's mother, Ada Hagan; Richard L. Trumka, secretary-treasurer, and Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president, AFL-CIO; President Sweeney's wife, Maureen; Irena Kirkland, widow of former AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland; Monsignor George G. Higgins, former director, Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference (later known as the U.S. Catholic Conference), who attended the first dedication in 1956; Gene Sperling, Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director of the National Economic Council; Aida Alvarez, Administrator, Small Business Administration; and Charles M. Brain, Assistant to the President and Director of Legislative Affairs.

### **Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Citizens Medal**

*January 8, 2001*

Thank you and good afternoon. I would like to thank all of you for coming and welcome you to the White House. But especially the Members of Congress who either are or have been here. Senator Cleland, welcome, sir. Senator Kennedy; Representative Gilman—Mr. Chairman Gilman; Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton; Representative Sununu. And Mr. Justice Souter, we're delighted to see you here today. We thank you for coming.

I won't have many more chances to do this, so I'd also like to thank the United States Marine Band for being here and for all their work.

Yesterday, Hillary and Chelsea and I went to Foundry Methodist Church, which has been our home church since we've been in Washington. And they asked me to speak on reflections and anticipations. And I said I had many anticipations. I anticipated, for example, that my religious bearing would be severely tested when I returned to commercial

air travel. *[Laughter]* And I further anticipated that whenever I walked into a large room for the next 6 months, I would be lost because the Marine Band wouldn't be there to play a song anymore. *[Laughter]* So I thank them so much for all they've done this last 8 years.

One of the greatest honors I have had as President has been the opportunity to recognize and to honor, on behalf of the American people, the rich and diverse accomplishments of our fellow citizens. This ceremony marks the last time I will honor such a remarkable group at the White House. And I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity.

More than two centuries ago, our Founders staked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor on a revolutionary proposition, that people of competing ideas but common ideals could form a more perfect Union, a democracy built solely on the strength of its citizens. They felt it essential that America honor both the individual and the idea that a free people can accomplish their greatest work only by doing so together, for our common good.

Today, we honor citizens whose individual contributions to the common good embody this ideal in its purest essence. We honor them with the President's Citizens Medal.

Among our Nation's highest civilian honors, the Citizens Medal is a symbol of our gratitude as a people for those who have, in particular, performed exemplary deeds of service to others.

Now, let me say a few words about each of those who we honor, and I will ask my military aide to present me with a medal, and then I will present the medals.

Every baseball fan knows Hank Aaron holds more records than any other single ball player. Indeed, one of the truly great experiences of my Presidency was going to Atlanta for the 25th anniversary of the night Hank Aaron broke Babe Ruth's home run record. But his courage and dignity have left a lasting mark on far more than baseball.

We honor him today not only for the power of his swing but for the power of his spirit, for breaking down barriers not just on the baseball field or in the front office but also within America's heart. In the spotlight

and under pressure, he always answered bigotry and brutality with poise and purpose.

In chasing his dream, Hank Aaron gave others the inspiration to chase their own. And after he left baseball, he and his wonderful wife, Billye, have done what they could to give young people more tools to win their own chase. Hank Aaron, you are an American hero, and we salute you for your life.

*[At this point, the President presented the medal.]*

Because he could float like a butterfly and sting like a bee, Muhammad Ali became the first boxer in history to capture the heavyweight title three separate times. Along the way, he captured the world's imagination and its heart. Outside the ring, Muhammad Ali has dedicated his life to working for children, feeding the hungry, supporting his faith, and standing up for racial equality. He has always fought for a just and more humane world, breaking down barriers here in America and around the world.

There are no telling how many tens of millions of people had their hearts swell with pride and their eyes swell with tears in 1996 when Muhammad Ali lit the Olympic torch, because we know, now and forever, he is the greatest.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

As a civics teacher fresh out of college, Juan Andrade showed up for the first day of class eager to teach his students the fundamentals of American democracy. Two days later, he was under arrest. What was his terrible crime? He was teaching his students in his native tongue, Spanish, which was at the time a violation of Texas law.

That early injustice helped to spark Juan's life-long crusade for Hispanic-American civil rights, including the founding of the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute and nearly a thousand registration drives that have enfranchised over one million new voters. Today, we honor Juan Andrade for his courage, his commitment to both democracy and diversity, and for giving so many more Americans a voice in their own destiny.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Ruby Bridges was born in 1954, the year the Supreme Court decided *Brown v. Board of Education*. Six years later, when she entered the first grade, the schools in her home town of New Orleans were still separate and unequal.

Ruby was chosen to integrate William Frantz public school, singlehandedly. So when mobs gathered and shouted around this 6-year-old girl, she knelt and prayed. She had two U.S. marshalls ahead of her and two behind, but “prayer,” she later said, “was my protection.”

Today, in lectures and books, Ruby is telling younger generations her story of strength and faith. And through the Ruby Bridges Foundation, she is helping schools to establish diversity programs, to achieve without the struggle and pain what she did four and a half decades ago.

Today, we pay tribute to the courage of a little girl and to the commitment of a lifetime.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

One of Ron Brown’s favorite Bible passages came from the 40th chapter of Isaiah, “Those who wait upon the Lord shall have their strength renewed; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not grow weary; they shall walk, and not faint.”

Well, Ron walked, ran, and soared through life, and I can personally testify never grew weary. As the chairman of my party, he inspired people to believe in our democratic system and to get involved. As Secretary of Commerce, he opened up new markets at home and abroad, so that people throughout the world and here in America might, through work, have better lives for their families.

His legacy still burns brightly, not only in the hearts of those who knew him but also in the work of his daughter, Tracey, who wrote a wonderful biography of her father; the work of his son, Michael, who runs the Ron Brown Foundation; and the living testimony of all the young people who, even now, walk through doors he opened and cross bridges he built.

We honor his memory today and, Alma, I am glad you could be with us to share the moment.

[*The President presented the medal to Alma Brown, Ron Brown’s widow.*]

For nearly 20 years, Don Cameron has served as the executive director of the National Education Association. But his career began long before that, as a Michigan junior high school teacher in the early sixties. His starting salary was a handsome \$5,100 a year, hardly enough to support a family. So while teaching, he worked odd jobs, pumping gas, selling hardware, driving a truck, even digging graves—all for the love of teaching. Let no one say this man was not deadly serious about his job. [*Laughter*]

His enthusiasm has never wavered. During his remarkable tenure, the National Education Association grew by more than a million members; it nearly doubled in size. He has always fought for quality schools, smaller classes, making sure that teachers are meeting high professional standards, and in turn, are treated as the professionals they are. Our schools are stronger and our children’s future brighter because of his decades of dedicated leadership.

Thank you, Don Cameron.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

When Pope John the 23d urged Catholics to engage in the world and address the needs of the poor, Sister Carol Coston, an Adrian Dominican nun, answered the call. She left the security of her convent to live and work in a public housing project. Then she helped to create Network, a national Catholic lobby that has mobilized thousands of nuns and lay people to fight for social progress in South Africa, for women’s rights, and for economic justice. She helped to win passage of the Community Reinvestment Act, which has led to billions of dollars in investment in our inner cities. I am proud to say, Sister, 95 percent of it in the last 8 years.

And she founded Partners for the Common Good, a fund that invests in housing and entrepreneurship in low income neighborhoods. For your work as an agent of change, rooted in the values of your faith, Sister Carol, a grateful nation honors you today.

[*The President presented the medal.*]

As a young Government lawyer during World War II, Archibald Cox helped to get labor unions and corporations to stop fighting each other—a work that's still going on today—and to start working together for an allied victory. That same steely resolve and sense of high purpose have marked his entire astonishing career. Fighting for labor rights in the fifties, civil rights in the sixties, and during Watergate, rising that fateful night to defend our Constitution, he has come to embody the highest ideals of integrity and courage in public life.

Archibald Cox, every American, whether he or she knows your name or not, owes you a profound debt of thanks for a lifetime of your service to your country and its Constitution.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Just as Lewis and Clark set forth to explore a continent shrouded in mysterious possibility, Charles DeLisi pioneered the exploration of a modern day frontier, the human genome.

As an administrator and researcher in the Department of Energy in the mid-1980's, he worked in close partnership with Senator Pete Domenici, along with others who supported his efforts to marshal Federal resources and secure funding for this groundbreaking research.

Charles DeLisi's imagination and determination helped to ignite the revolution in sequencing that would ultimately unravel the code of human life itself. Thanks to Charles DeLisi's vision and leadership, in the year 2000 we announced the complete sequencing of the human genome. And researchers are now closer than ever to finding therapies and cures for ailments once thought untreatable.

At once scientist, entrepreneur, and teacher, Charles DeLisi is also, in the truest sense, a humanitarian, a man whose life work has been life itself. We honor you today, sir, along with the Members of the United States Congress, including your friend, Senator Domenici, who had the vision to support you when you began, before we could see this great turn in the road. Thank you.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

The spread of civil and human rights throughout America and across the globe has been one of the great dramas and triumphs of the last half century. Jack Greenberg has been at the center of the action.

As a young lawyer, he helped Thurgood Marshall argue *Brown v. Board of Education* before the Supreme Court. As head of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund for 23 years, he, himself, argued dozens of key racial discrimination cases before the high court. Through his early involvement with organizations such as Asia Watch, he aided the expansion of human rights around the world.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said that to truly live, one must share the action and passion of one's time. If that remains the standard, Jack Greenberg has truly lived and, in the process, has lifted the lives of countless others.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

When David Ho was a boy, he used puppets to act out stories about heroes who used supernatural powers to defend the weak. Everyone knew young David was uncommonly bright, but few could have imagined that one day he would harness the unimagined powers of science to defend patients whose immune systems were fatally weakened by AIDS.

By demonstrating the ways HIV attacks the human body, he fundamentally changed the way we understand and treat this devastating disease. His groundbreaking work, using protease inhibitors, in combination with standard therapies, has offered a longer life to countless people living with AIDS.

And so we thank you, David Ho, for giving us new hope that AIDS can be treated and one day cured and for reminding us that a child's dream can lead to miracles for others.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

In 1988 the students at Gallaudet University rose up to demand a university president who was like them, deaf or hard of hearing. Gallaudet, the only university in the world designed entirely for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, never had had a deaf president. That is, not until I. King Jordan.

His appointment was not only a triumph for the students of Gallaudet but a historic

breakthrough for all people with disabilities and a powerful reminder for the rest of our Nation that deaf people like I. King Jordan can excel and lead as well as any other Americans. Moved by his example and the efforts of the entire disability community, Congress soon passed the Americans with Disabilities Act, the most important civil rights legislation in the last quarter century.

I. King Jordan has been a great teacher, a great university president, a great inspiration to millions of people around the world. Along the way, he's found time to be a not inconsiderable athlete, I might add, running great distances at more than reasonable speeds. *[Laughter]* And he has been a very good friend to this President for the last 8 years.

Thank you President Jordan, for your example and your leadership.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Franklin Roosevelt once said, "We must scrupulously guard the civil rights and civil liberties of all our citizens, whatever their background." In the decades since, America has had few guardians of liberty more scrupulous or staunch than Anthony Lewis. Reporter, columnist, professor, author, Tony Lewis, in every role, has been a clear and courageous voice for the values at the core of our Constitution.

In books like, "Gideon's Trumpet," he has deepened our understanding of freedom of speech and our continuing battle for civil rights. Twice, his reporting has won the Pulitzer Prize. Perhaps even more important, throughout a lifetime, all his writings, including his column, have shown a commitment and a passion with a civil tone and a careful, thoughtful reasoning that have been more powerful than the forces of brute power and injustice.

Thank you, Tony Lewis, for the values you have espoused, for the way you have espoused them, and for never growing weary.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

It was 1944, wartime, and African-American soldiers were fighting and dying to protect freedom around the world. Unfortunately, African-Americans were also battling an insidious enemy here at home, Jim Crow.

It was then that a young mother, named Irene Morgan, took up that fight with dignity and determination.

On her way to a doctor's appointment, she refused to give up her seat on a segregated Greyhound bus and appealed her subsequent arrest all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court's 1946 ruling banning segregation on interstate transportation was an early victory in the struggle for civil rights. It signaled the beginning of the end for Jim Crow.

Over all the decades since, Irene Morgan has never asked for accolades, but today we honor her. We acknowledge our debt to her quiet and brave fight for freedom. And we acknowledge the fact that she was there before just about anybody else, and in spite of that, she still looks like a beautiful, young woman. Irene Morgan.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

When Constance Baker Motley joined the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, she set out to do nothing less than remake American law. Along the way, she herself made history.

A key strategist in the civil rights movement, she argued nine winning cases before the Supreme Court. She went on to become the first African-American woman elected to the New York State Senate, the first woman and the first African-American to be borough president of Manhattan, the first African-American woman to be named a Federal court judge.

Once she said she sought to, "prove in everything I do that blacks and women are as capable as anyone."

As advocate, lawyer, public servant, and judge, she has been far more than capable; she has been superb. And Constance Baker Motley, we are all in your debt.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

In the 1960's, Dr. Helen Rodriguez-Trias grew outraged at the poor quality of pediatric health care in her native Puerto Rico, so she created the island's first center for newborn babies at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Center and cut the hospital's infant death rate in half.

Ever since, in New York, in California, all across America, Dr. Rodriguez-Trias has

been working for better patient care, for better treatment and prevention of AIDS, for women's health rights.

For fighting the good fight and saving countless lives, mostly among poor people that are too often forgotten by others, I am proud to present this medal to Dr. Helen Rodriguez-Trias.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

When Edward Roybal joined the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1934, he didn't know he was embarking on a lifetime of service to his country, but it turned out that way. In World War II, he served in the Army; in the 1950's, on the Los Angeles city council. In 1962 he became the first Hispanic elected to Congress from California in almost a century, paving the way for a whole generation of Latino lawmakers. During his 30 years in Congress, he championed veterans, the elderly, the mentally ill, education, health care, and minority rights.

For a lifetime of work that has improved the lives of millions and for lighting the path for other Latino office holders, we honor today Edward Roybal. He is unable to join us, but it is a particular pleasure for me to present this award to his daughter, now a Member of the United States Congress, Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Eight years ago, in a very troubled time for the American economy, I asked Bob Rubin to head my economic team and to establish for the first time a National Economic Council in the White House and involving all the economic agencies of the Government. I did it not because he had been immensely successful in making money and knew a lot about the economy but because he also understood the very real impact decisions in Washington have on the lives and livelihoods of ordinary Americans all across this Nation.

As my National Economic Adviser and later as a superb Secretary of the Treasury, Bob balanced a commitment to fiscal prudence and social progress. He understood that good economics and a generous progressive social policy could go hand in hand.

He helped to balance the Nation's books and to balance the Nation's priorities. And it is no accident that his leadership in economic policy accompanied not only the longest economic expansion in history but, last year, the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years, the biggest increase in personal income among the lowest 20 percent of working Americans in a very long time, and a general growth in the equality and harmony we all seek from all our people.

He also never let me forget our special responsibilities to the inner cities of America, which is why I mentioned earlier that even though the Community Reinvestment Act has been on the books for over 20 years, 95 percent of all the investment occurred during the last 8 years.

Thank you, Bob Rubin, for helping make America a better place.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

As a combat platoon leader in the Korean war, Warren Rudman never worried about the race or background of the men with whom he fought. As a United States Senator, he never let his party affiliation keep him from speaking his mind or building alliances to fight the great legislative battles. He fought to strengthen and modernize our national defense and to put our fiscal house in order.

As a private citizen, he has continued to champion those causes with bipartisan zeal. As cofounder of the Concord Coalition and as the leader of my Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, he has repeatedly, during these 8 years of my Presidency, undertaken difficult, thankless, inherently controversial tasks with an honesty and candor that showed a support for our Nation and a willingness to call them as he saw them.

For his wise counsel, and his faithful service to our Nation, I am grateful and proud to present Senator Warren Rudman with the Citizens Medal.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Soon after graduating from law school, Charles Ruff volunteered to go to Liberia to teach law. There he contracted an illness that left him in a wheelchair for life. But this obstacle, nor any other, could ever keep him

from doing good. He went on to serve in the Justice Department as United States Attorney and the chief lawyer for the District of Columbia, the town he loved so well.

I chose him as my White House Counsel because of his unmatched ability as a legal advocate and his even deeper devotion to the Constitution and the rule of law. Not long ago he agreed to lead the Fair Labor Association to help end sweatshops and improve the lives of the world's poorest people.

A few weeks ago, Chuck Ruff left our lives, far too soon. But his determined spirit continues to inspire us and to call on us to do more, to do right, to do good. We at the White House loved him very much, but so did countless others, far beyond the walls of this hallowed place. His secretary of 21 years, Ora Theard, will accept the medal in his memory. And we thank him for the memories.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

As a young man, Arthur Schneier fled his homeland and survived the Holocaust as a refugee. He knows, therefore, firsthand the consequences of hatred and intolerance and has devoted his life to fighting them. As founder and president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, he has encouraged interfaith dialog, intercultural understanding, and the cause of religious freedom around the world. He has served as international envoy for four administrations, including my own.

As Chairman of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad and as the long-time rabbi of Park East Synagogue in New York City, Rabbi, I thank you for all the many things you have done here with me the last 8 years to promote religious liberty around the world, and I thank you for a lifetime of good work and good examples.

I look forward to seeing you in New York, where perhaps you will become my rabbi. Thank you.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Before he was 40 years old, Eli Segal had already built a string of successful businesses. He had also had a string of successful friends. In 1992, by blind accident, I wound up being

one of them, and I asked my old friend, Eli Segal, to join my administration, where he built from scratch two of our most successful programs.

Eli began AmeriCorps, which has already given more than 150,000 young people a chance to serve in their communities and, in so doing, earn some money for college. Indeed, more people served in AmeriCorps in the first 5 years of its existence than in the first 25 years of the Peace Corps' existence.

After he returned briefly to private life and his great affinity for making money, I called him back, and I said we needed some more help. He then built our Welfare to Work Partnership, which enlisted in the space of about 3 years, over 20,000 businesses, in hiring more than one million people from the welfare rolls.

These efforts have both widened the circle of opportunity in America and strengthened the tradition of service to country. For this, all Americans owe Eli Segal a special debt of gratitude. If you have ever seen the faces of those young AmeriCorps kids or the pride of people who have moved from welfare to work, you know why we're in Eli's debt. Thank you very much.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

John Seiberling has worn many hats and won many accolades. As a soldier in World War II, as a lawyer for the New York Legal Aids Society, a community planner for his beloved city of Akron, a Congressman from Ohio fighting for civil rights and arms control—in all arenas he has contributed to community and country.

But his greatest achievement was crafting and winning passage of the Alaska Lands Act of 1980, which doubled the size of our inventory of national parks and wildlife refuges and tripled the area of federally designated wilderness. With that legislation, John Seiberling singlehandedly saved more of our wilderness than any previous American, a legacy that will last for generations.

Unfortunately, this environmental hero is unable to join us today, but we are very glad that his son, John, will accept the medal on his behalf.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Few newspaper publishers in American history have been more effective crusaders for justice than the late John Sengstacke. As owner and editor of the legendary Chicago Defender for almost 60 years, he provided a national forum for African-American issues and voices that otherwise would have gone unheard. He nurtured the talents of countless black journalists, and as a confidant of Presidents, played a key roll in integrating the armed services, the Postal Service, Major League Baseball, and the White House press corps.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I offer this medal posthumously to his son, Bobby.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

When bigots blew up his house with dynamite, the Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth stood in front of the smoking rubble and renewed his call for an integrated Birmingham. When the city fathers had him arrested for civil disobedience, he filled the jails with so many sympathetic protesters, there was no room to hold them all. When angry authorities blasted him with a firehose, he told them they could knock him down, but they could not extinguish the torch of justice.

Fred Shuttlesworth risked his life so that every American, no matter the color of his or her skin, might live in a nation of dignity, opportunity, and equal justice under law. We thank him for a lifetime of leadership, and for an unextinguished spirit.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

She was born in England, but Elizabeth Taylor became thoroughly American royalty. For more than a generation, she has reigned over the silver screen, stirring hearts and capturing imaginations. She earned two Oscars and countless other honors as an actress.

But perhaps her greatest role has been off the screen, as a relentless and very, very early crusader for AIDS research and care. She has not only raised—*[applause]*—she raised millions and millions of dollars in this fight and raised awareness about the human impact of this dreaded disease before many, many others were on the bandwagon.

Elizabeth Taylor has brought to life unforgettable characters on film, but she has brought even more hope to millions around

the world. We thank her for sharing her talent and her heart. Thank you, Elizabeth Taylor.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

When the Nazis marched on Vienna, a 6-year-old girl fled with her mother across Europe, only to wind up in an internment camp rife with starvation, disease, and death. Out of that searing experience, Marion Wiesel summoned the courage to commit her life to teaching others, especially children, about the human cost of hatred, intolerance, and racism.

She has written a documentary about the 1.3 million children murdered in the Holocaust and has translated the books of her husband, Eli Wiesel, so that countless more people can read and learn their lessons. With the money from his Nobel Prize, she and Eli established the Wiesel Foundation, to educate children against indifference to the suffering of others.

Marion, for your mission of hope against hate, of life against death, of good over evil, it is an honor to award you this Citizens Medal.

*[The President presented the medal.]*

Patrisha Wright was training to be an orthopedic surgeon when a degenerative muscle disease left her with double vision. Instead of fixing broken bones, she set about to fix what was broken in our system and dedicated her life to ending discrimination against people with disabilities.

As founder of the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, she joined forces with the wider civil rights community. Her strategic brilliance and no-nonsense approach during passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act earned her the title of “The General.”

Now she works to empower people and families with disabilities throughout the entire world. Ever since a visual impairment changed the path of her career, her dedication to civil rights has changed the path of America and helped more of us to see clearly. Today, we salute you, “The General,” Patrisha Wright.

*[The President presented the medal.]*



Ladies and gentlemen, we thank you for joining us to honor these remarkable people. Some of them are famous, and some were not, at least until today. Some of them had their service thrust upon them by circumstances; others chose the path. Whatever their stories, together they form a remarkable fabric of what is best about our country, what is best about its history, and what is most encouraging when we look to the future.

They remind us, once again, something that I need to remember in these days, that the greatest title any one of us can ever hold is that of citizen.

Thank you, and goodbye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Comdr. Pat DeQuattro, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol To Amend the 1949 Convention on the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission With Documentation**  
*January 8, 2001*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Protocol to Amend the 1949 Convention on the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, done at Guayaquil, June 11, 1999, and signed by the United States, subject to ratification, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on the same date. In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol. The Protocol will not require implementing legislation.

The Protocol amends the Convention for the Establishment of an Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, done at Washington May 31, 1949, and entered into force March 3, 1950 (the "Convention"), to allow the European Union to become a member of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) created under the Convention. Presently, the Convention is only open to governments of states. The Protocol will,

upon entry into force, allow regional economic integration organizations like the European Union to become a party to the Convention and a full member of the IATTC provided all parties to the Convention give their consent to such adherence. The Protocol also provides that the Member States of any regional economic integration organization that is allowed to adhere to the Protocol are barred from joining or continuing as a party to the Convention except with respect to the Member States' territories that are outside the territorial scope of the treaty establishing the regional economic integration organization.

Allowing the European Union to accede to the Convention is important to the United States because it would mean that the vessels operating under the jurisdiction of the European Union and its Member States would be bound by the conservation and management measures adopted by the IATTC for the fishery resources of the eastern Pacific Ocean.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
January 8, 2001.

**Remarks to the Democratic National Committee Staff**  
*January 8, 2001*

Well, first of all, I want to say to all of you, I'm sorry I kept you waiting, but I promised you I was going to work until the last day, and that's what I'm doing. [*Laughter*]

I spent a little time today working on the Middle East and a little time today rededicating the AFL-CIO building and rededicating myself to their issues and their cause and to not letting the progress they've made in the last 8 years be reversed and a number of other things.

I have my Chief of Staff, John Podesta, and Maria Echaveste and my Political Director, Minyon Moore, Lynn Cutler—a lot of people came over from the White House. They love you guys. They wanted to be here with me.